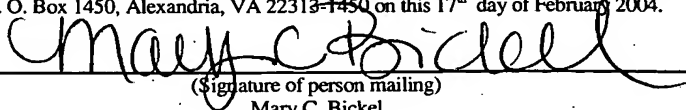


I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first-class mail in an envelope addressed to: Hon. Commissioner for Patents, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on this 17th day of February 2004.

By



(Signature of person mailing)

Mary C. Bickel

(Typed or printed name of person)

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN RE APPLICATION OF: J.C. Colberg, et al. :

APPLICATION NO.: To Be Assigned

: Examiner: To Be Assigned

FILING DATE: Herewith

: Group Art Unit: To Be Assigned

TITLE: Process And Ester Derivatives Useful For
Preparation Of Cephalosporins

Hon. Commissioner for Patents
P. O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Please amend the present application as follows:

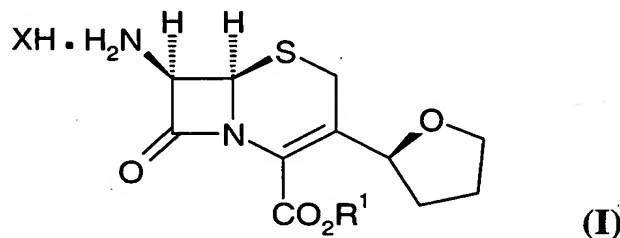
IN THE SPECIFICATION

Before the first paragraph on page 1 and after the title of the present application, please insert the following:

The present application claims the priority of U.S. Patent Application No. 10/006,579, filed on December 4, 2001, which in turn claims the priority benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/251,018, filed on December 4, 2000. The contents of these priority documents are herein incorporated by reference.

MARKED-UP COPY OF THE CLAIMS

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A process for preparing a compound of formula (I):



wherein R¹ is *para*-nitrobenzyl or allyl; X is halo;
comprising the steps of: